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ISSUE 298 MAY 2016  
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# common ground

**FREE MAGAZINE**

**JANE GOODALL**  
Mind and Heart

Pharma's predatory tactics

Psoriasis free, naturally

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 With Carmen Dunn, BComm, CNP

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 With Steve Julien, BEng, CNP, CDPAT

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*Childbirth is more admirable than conquest, more amazing than self-defense, and as courageous as either one.*

– Gloria Steinem

Cover design by Kris Kozak

Canada





# Christy Clark's biggest hits, or misses

by Bruce Mason

Christy Clark is in perpetual campaign mode, preferring photo-ops to real time in government. Too often, the filter between the endlessly chattering mouth and mind of the former talk-show radio host seems faulty. What comes out in public is, at best, inappropriate for a provincial leader. Like the time when she struggled with a microphone that wouldn't stay upright, saying, "I'm not going to say it reminds me of my ex husband." Titillating, or a turn-off?



Christy would flood  
tens of thousands of  
acres of prime Peace  
River Valley farmland  
to feed and fuel her  
fracking hallucinations,  
as nightmarish record  
global temperatures and  
sea levels rise every month  
and Fort McMurray burns.

Clark is on record, stating, "I would ask that people judge us, judge me, based on our record, based on what we actually did." Provincial voters have a year to deliberate before delivering a verdict. Counting down to the 41st British Columbia general election on May 9, 2017, here are just some of Christy's biggest hits – or misses:

Less than one year ago, she was touting her "Om the Bridge" event to celebrate the International Day of Yoga on June 21. The plan was to shut down the Burrard Bridge for people to pose in a mass yoga class for several hours that morning. The province would spend \$150,000 on planning, organizing and security while an energy company, AltaGas, chipped in 10 grand. Her poorly laid scheme was plagued by an instant backlash, including those

who pointed out it was also National Aboriginal Day. Sponsors, including Lululemon and Yyoga, quickly bailed out. Wrong place, wrong time, whatever, and Clark eventually and mercifully cancelled her crackpot distraction.

Our always graceful-under-pressure Christy tweeted, "Hey Yoga Haters – bet you can't wait for international Tai chi day."

A year is an eternity in politics and the public, generally, has a short memory. "Yogagate" was a giggle compared to what's been dubbed "Deletagate." Clark and her officials triple-deleted emails and records, then Laura Miller, executive director of Christy's Liberals, resigned after criminal charges for destruction of government records while previously working for an Ontario premier. "A person of integrity," said Clark, over shouts in the legislature calling for the Premier to follow suit and also depart.

Integrity? Accountability? How about "Healthgate," the sudden, unjust firing of eight health ministry research-



ers for alleged breach of privacy. It was first reported by Alan Cassels in *Common Ground* (April, 2013) after one young researcher committed suicide. "The terminations in 2012 were not handled well," opined Health honcho

Terry Lake, the Minister responsible, amid the almost deafening chorus for a public enquiry and Big Pharma donor fingerprints all over the tragic mess.

Captain Christy's neo-liberal vessel is springing ever more leaks, especially from the top. Recently revealed: the premier was paid \$277,000 from BC Liberals' fund-raising since she was elected leader in 2011. That averages out to an annual takeaway of \$46,167, on top of her existing \$190,000, plus benefits and pensions. "I guess I would have happily disclosed it last year if you had asked me," she said of the practice, which is not allowed in virtually any other government in Canada. It puts her in the top 0.66 percent of BC income earners. "We all do that under the rules in the province. We've done it for a long time in British Columbia," she sputtered.

But Clark's office also racked up a record \$475,000 in expenses between 2011 and 2012, more than double her predecessor, Gordon Campbell. They include air- *continued p.30...*

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Jane Goodall with Mr. H, her stuffed monkey. The “H” is for hope.  
Photo by Stuart Clarke

*Jane Goodall is a British primatologist, ethologist, anthropologist and UN Messenger of Peace. Considered to be the world's foremost expert on chimpanzees, Goodall is best known for her 55-year study of social and family interactions of wild chimpanzees in Gombe Stream National Park, Tanzania. She is the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and the Roots & Shoots program and she has worked extensively on conservation and animal welfare issues. As part of the R&S program, a grant was awarded to a group of grade 11 and 12 at the Aldergrove Community Secondary School in BC to design and construct an outdoor learning space. Twenty-five students, of whom seven were Indigenous, led the project. The learning space will be used by hundreds of students as well as people in the community.*

*Become a chimp guardian at [www.janegoodall.ca](http://www.janegoodall.ca), [www.rootsandshoots.org](http://www.rootsandshoots.org)*

**C**ommon Ground: So much has happened since 1998 when I first talked to you about Roots and Shoots and your wildlife research, education and conservation.

**Jane Goodall:** (Laughs.) Well, in my world – the Jane Goodall Institute – everything's grown. The chimpanzee sanctuary we talked about 18 years ago is still going strong and the JGI isn't actually involved in running that particular sanctuary. We have a huge sanctuary in the Republic of Congo with about 165 orphan chimps. We acquired three large forested islands from the Congolese government and around 60 of our chimps are there; they're not exactly free because we still have to supplement their food, but there's forests on the islands so it's way better than the over-crowded sanctuary. And some of them are being prepared for

# Mind and heart working together

## A conversation with Jane Goodall

by Joseph Roberts

possible release back into the wild.

The national park where the Gombe chimps live is still protected. The trees outside, which were cut down by desperate villagers, have now regenerated because we've been working to improve the lives of those villagers. And one really important thing is that our youth program, which began in 1991 in Tanzania with 12 high school students, is now in 140 countries around the world. There are about 100,000 active groups of young people of all ages and they're all working to make this a better world for people, for other animals and for the environment we share.

**CG:** How is the Roots and Shoots whole-school approach evolving?

**JG:** We have several schools, which have become Roots and Shoots schools. They must fulfill certain criteria and have the same ethics and principles, but the young people choose the projects. They're not told what to choose although there are certain themes we encourage all the different groups to take part in for the feeling of unity. We're trying to develop a family around the world of young people sharing a philosophy.

In some schools, the curricula include roots and shoots and it is woven into every subject; those are the Roots and Shoots Schools. Then there are others where they don't actually have it in the curriculum, but students get together for after-school clubs. There are also family groups. It's completely amazing.

**CG:** I promised a young person I would ask this next question: if you could study another animal as well as the chimps, what would that be?

**JG:** I spent around six months studying hyenas. That may sound like a strange choice, but it taught me so much because they're incredibly intelligent and fascinating. Of course, they're nocturnal, which makes it harder to study them, but it helped me understand the chimp social structure: there's a long childhood dependency. The child is dependent on the mother for milk and reassurance and everything for five

years. The chimp males are dominant, but in the hyena society – roughly the same size community – the females are dominant and the males are subordinate.

So you see these two different systems. In the hyena society, the babies are left down in the dens when the mothers go hunting and they have to survive on the mother's milk. Unlike other carnivores, the mother doesn't take food back. Like the chimpanzee, the youngster is dependent on the mother's milk so it makes sense for the female to be dominant; she then gets the bigger share of meat so her milk is better, whereas for a female chimpanzee to go around fighting and striving for dominance would be very bad for the baby she's carrying on her chest! It helped me how these things evolve. The hyenas have personali-



To me, art and science are all one and it's part of a spirituality and an understanding of the connectedness of all life.

ties and I'd really like to learn more about them. But I'd also like to study elephants. I'd like to study just about everything. It's all fascinating.

**CG:** People protect the things they love so how can we learn to care and love better?

**JG:** That's part of Roots and Shoots: learning to love and care, learning compassion, trying to introduce it to very young children, helping them understand that we and the animals are in the same boat. We're one family, really. It used to be thought only humans used and made tools. Not true. It used to be thought we were the only creatures with personalities, intellect and emotions. Not true. So if young children learn that animals have



feelings like us, that they're all different like us, then the bonding with animals actually helps make people nicer to other humans. It turns out that youngsters who take a gun and shoot people very often have had a history of cruelty to animals when they were children.

**CG:** Do you sense people are becoming more compassionate?

**JG:** It's hard to generalize. I think there's a greater awareness, but there's still so much cruelty, so much unfeeling behaviour. If people really knew what went on in factory farms – if when they ate a piece of chicken, pork or beef, they knew the intense suffering, the cruelty. When I learned about factory farms, I looked at the next piece of meat I had on my plate and said to myself, 'This symbolizes fear, pain and death. I don't want to eat that.'

We now know that people eating more and more meat around the world is destroying the planet. Forests cut down to grow the grain, to feed the animals, releasing CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere and, you know, food in one end, gas out the other – that's methane. It's wasting huge amounts of water, vast amounts of fossil fuel. We can live without petrol, but we can't live without water.

**CG:** How can we become better stewards of our precious water?

**JG:** People don't understand about water. It's not surprising when you think of big agribusiness and the way they're pulling up water from deeper and deeper in the aquifers. If you go to an area where food should never be grown because there isn't enough water, they're depleting the aquifers to grow food, very often to feed cattle.

**CG:** A difficult topic for people to consider is the use of animals for medical research.

**JG:** I find the use of animals in research to be really terrible, particularly when it's pharmaceutical. You'll torture rabbits to test cosmetics in their eyes. They get ulcerated eyes just so women can look glamorous with a bit of stupid make-up on their faces.

**CG:** You've raised public awareness about chimpanzees and given them a voice. What other issues need more attention?

**JG:** There are so many: protection of wild animals in North America. The fact that wolves are now being shot from helicopters in BC. In some places, they've lifted the moratorium on shooting caribou during the migration and the

indigenous people say that's the end of the caribou as we know them if they are killed going through this narrow corridor. Grizzly bears are about to lose their endangered species status in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem where hundreds of thousands of people flock to see them. It means every time a grizzly leaves the actual protective path, it can be killed. You know, they're used to people, they're sitting targets. Then there's genetically modified food and the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers on the land. Bee colonies are collapsing.

I could go on and on. There's so much pollution and so much waste of food. Gandhi said, "The planet can provide for human need, but not human greed" so



another issue to tackle is profit because if you're very poor, you will buy the cheapest food no matter how it's made or how unethical or environmentally unfriendly it is because you can't afford anything else.

If you look at the other end of the spectrum, many people have far more than they need. We need more people thinking about the consequences of all the little choices we make. We need a critical mass of people on this planet who understand that while we need money to live, we shouldn't live for money unless we live to make money to make the world a better place.

**CG:** I totally agree. That's what inspires me to do this magazine. I'm so happy to share this conversation with you. What keeps you healthy and happy, given your awareness of all these issues?

**JG:** I have four reasons for hope. One is young people because they get it. As this Roots and Shoots program spreads, and we collaborate with other youth

programs with similar philosophies, I spend so much time with young people and they're so excited to see me. Here I am, this elderly lady, and yet the kids are jumping up and down with shining eyes. They want to meet Dr. Jane and tell me what they've done to make the world a better place.

It's very inspiring. There was a little boy of five in Victoria – very small and very serious – at the front of the book-signing line. He had spectacles so he looked very solemn. I signed his book and he followed his mother to the door and then he turned round and said, "I think you're an angel." Well, I was just melting. He was absolutely charming. So that's one thing – the response I get

hundred. The whooping cranes which nest in Canada – at one time there were 12 birds left and now there's 500 because people work to protect them saying, "No, I will not let this amazing creature become extinct." People laugh at them and say it can't be done and they fight. That illustrates the indomitable human spirit, which is another reason for hope.

People I meet are completely amazing. The other day, I met a man who was a war correspondent, an American who was in one of the war zones, perhaps Afghanistan or Iran, I'm not sure. He lost both legs above the knee and one arm. When he was medevac'd back, he was crying saying, 'Please let me die, my life is finished' and there were two medics on the plane saying, 'No, no, modern medicine can really do a lot for you.' He now has two prosthetic legs and one arm and is back in the war zone taking photographs and reporting. That is an amazing spirit.

There's also social media. For the first time in history, instead of just reaching the people you can speak or write to, issues can go viral. Instead of having several thousand people speaking up for a cause, you can have billions. It's happening.

**CG:** How do you see art and science, the heart and mind, cooperating more in our society to achieve these goals?

**JG:** That's one of the things we push in Roots and Shoots – the mind and heart working in harmony together. Only then can we achieve our true potential. To me, art and science are all one and it's part of a spirituality and an understanding of the connectedness of all life. So we encourage this very much in all our young people.


I've got a blog called *Jane Goodall's All Good News – Stories of Hope*. It's coming out whenever I can get something written, but I'll put other things in as well – only good news because people get so much bad news and they get so despondent. Once people understand what can be done, they're more likely to try to do it.

**CG:** What do you see as the next step?

**JG:** The next step for me is carrying on doing what I'm doing. Somebody asked the other day, 'What's the next phase of your life?' I said, 'Dying.' There was dead silence.

**CG:** Dying to what comes after.

**JG:** Yes. We all die, but it's either a great adventure or it's nothing. Which ever case, it's okay.

  
We and the animals are  
in the same boat. We're  
one family, really.

There's also the resilience of nature. Places totally destroyed can once again sustain life. Sudbury is an amazing example. Animals on the brink of extinction, like the Vancouver Island marmot, which was down to 12 and there are now a few



# Vitamin D & K combo

a game-changer for psoriasis sufferers



Finally wearing shorts after 47 years of psoriasis Photo by Daniela Ciucci

In the summer of 2014, my psoriasis flared dramatically. By the time I saw my dermatologist, 90% of my body was affected by a combination of plaque and guttate psoriasis. The diagnosis: severe.

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition that affects three to five out of every 100 people in North America and Europe. It's a four-billion-dollar-a-year business for pharmaceutical companies in the US alone. It devastates its sufferers and it's incurable.

Those who suffer with this disease spend thousands of dollars on creams and medications. They fall for pyramid scheme snake oil promises of a cure because they are desperate. They risk their health on pharmaceuticals that can thin their skin, suppress their immune system or damage their liver or kidneys. There are always side effects.

My dermatologist suggested methotrexate, a chemo drug that can possibly affect the liver. To be eligible for MSP (Medical Services Plan of BC) coverage of the newer "biologics," it would have to be proven that the

methotrexate was either not working or was damaging my body. If I wanted to bypass the methotrexate – and MSP coverage – and go directly to biologics, it would cost in the neighbourhood of \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year. And there is no guarantee the biologics will work.

Here's where a handful of luck is better than a boatload of knowledge. I searched the Internet and found the National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) and joined the NPF-sponsored Team Inspire discussion group. There, I found a thread – patient hosted discussion – about a little known combination of the vitamins D3 and K2. And there were impressive photos. With nothing to lose, I ordered the vitamins. I had already eliminated dairy from my diet.

Six weeks after starting this vitamin protocol, I did not have one spot of psoriasis on my body, for the first time in 47 years.

I started my own thread on the NPF Team Inspire site called "...and his jaw dropped." I chose this title because when my dermatologist saw me after I'd been on this

by Dakota Hamilton

protocol for only five weeks – his jaw dropped. Within a few months, the thread had grown significantly. Other people were also getting results.

But then things got strange. Trolls began visiting the thread with warnings about the dangers of high vitamin D3 consumption. Warning letters came from Team Inspire. Deletions of posts occurred – some of them mine and some from those who posted on the thread. More warnings from the "Team" arrived threatening my suspension from my own discussion group. I wrote to them asking "Why?" but received no response.

I found another like-minded psoriasis sufferer, Charlie, in Kansas. He was writing about magnesium chloride used topically. Charlie had found out about magnesium chloride by accident when he was working on his pond, tormented by mosquitoes. He noticed his friend wasn't getting bitten.

It turned out his friend was taking magnesium chloride, orally. Charlie found a bag of road de-icer, which is mostly magnesium chloride and, interestingly, the highest mineral content in the Dead Sea, a destination for thousands of people suffering from psoriasis. He mixed it with water and sprayed it on his arms. It worked and the mosquitoes retreated.

A few weeks later, he noticed the psoriasis on his arms was going away. He sprayed the solution all over his body and although it burned, he kept it up – several times a day. Four months later, he was psoriasis free for the first time in over 30 years.

I was also using magnesium chloride along with the K2 and D3 so I suggested we join forces and start a new thread. Charlie was concerned he might have trouble running two discussion groups at the same time. His worries were promptly made irrelevant when Team Inspire shut down his thread. No explanation was given.

It had taken five months to get to 1,000 posts on my original thread. Our combined thread hit 1,000 in one month, the fastest growing thread in NPF history. People who had been using the K2-D3 combination saw their clearing jump dramatically with the addition of magnesium chloride. And the reverse was also true. When those who were using only magnesium chloride added the K2 and D3 supplements, their skin cleared more rapidly. We knew we were on to something.

But, as we were beginning to suspect, not everyone was happy about our success.

Here's the reality. Pharmaceutical companies do not fund research of alternative remedies. There's no money in it for them. They cannot patent supplements or vitamins. They fund research for allopathic – treatment by conventional means – medicines. Period.

Here is the list of the National Psoriasis Foundation corporate members in 2014:

Platinum: Abbvie, Celgene  
Silver: Amgen, Janssen  
Bronze: Novartis, Pfizer  
Corporate: Lilly, Stiefel



Was this foundation being funded by large pharmaceutical companies? Were they in a conflict of interest? We had to wonder, especially after Charlie was again suspended, this time permanently. The more that people sent testimonials about the effectiveness of the protocol, the more we were being targeted.

We gave up, deciding the only way to get this information out to people was to start our own website, in which all the information about this protocol would be free. We used the testimonials that had been sent to us on the Inspire site – 40 testimonials plus 10 sets of photographs from people who had gotten results.

Within two days, we were threatened by the NPF Team Inspire with legal action if we did not remove all the testimonials from our website. A second letter threatened permanent suspension for me, with the additional threat that all my posts on the Inspire site – nine months of work – would be removed.

We removed the testimonials. And Team Inspire removed all evidence that I had ever written on their site. Nothing remains. And I have been permanently banned from the National Psoriasis Foundation site.

My crime? I had shared a natural remedy that was non-patentable and that worked, not just for me, but also for many others. A remedy that costs very little to maintain. A remedy with virtually no side effects.

There is logic to this new protocol. If three to five people in North America and Europe suffer from psoriasis and only one to two per 1,000 suffer from it in Asian countries, some questions need to be asked,

including, “Could diet effect psoriasis?”

Excess calcium has been found in psoriasis plaques. Another study stated that people with psoriasis had an inability to metabolize calcium. Until recently, most Asian countries consumed little dairy. As their consumption rises, so does their incidence of psoriasis.



**My crime? I had shared a natural  
remedy that was non-patentable  
and that worked, not just for me,  
but also for many others. A remedy  
that costs very little to maintain. A  
remedy with virtually no side effects.**

The highest amount of the vitamin K2 (MK-7) can be found in only one food source: natto, a popular food in Japan.

Magnesium chloride is used in the production of tofu, eaten in most Asian countries. And it is used in other Asian foods.

Vitamin D3 is the sunshine vitamin. The use of sunscreen, along with spending most of the workday indoors, has created a D3 deprived population.

How does this protocol work? In a simplified version, vitamin D3 pulls excess calcium from soft tissue (skin) and arteries where it shouldn't be. Magnesium chloride keeps the calcium fluid. And vitamin K2 (MK-7) directs the calcium to bones and teeth where it should be. Dairy is too concentrated a form of calcium for most psoriasis sufferers to tolerate.

It's encouraging to see more documentaries showing the questionable workings of large pharmaceutical companies. They have deep pockets and use them to silence or discount the findings of smaller companies that promote less invasive, alternative treatments for numerous diseases.

But we need to beware. Recently, a so-called documentary about psoriasis shows a man whose life has been shattered by the disease, although you never actually see his psoriasis. His doctor puts him on an unnamed medication. It's a feel-good story. His skin is cleared. Happy ending. However, scroll down through the credits and you see the final credit – in small print – is Janssen, a large pharmaceutical company and a Silver Corporate Member of the NPF.

While there is no cure – hence the expression, “the heartbreak of psoriasis” – there are natural remedies that can reduce it to a minor irritation. Haven't heard of them? Now you know why.

After decades of suffering from psoriasis, my skin has remained clear for over a year and a half. ◀

For more information about this protocol – all information is free – visit [www.freedomfrompsoriasis.com](http://www.freedomfrompsoriasis.com)



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# Pharma's predatory scare tactics

## They have no place in Canadian universities

**W**andering the halls of a college or university campus can be enlightening in seeing how the pharmaceutical marketing machine is insinuating itself into the lives of young people.

Last month, while giving a public lecture at the University of Victoria, I spotted a glossy poster entitled, “Reasons Why You Should Help Protect Yourself Against HPV.” It featured a man and two women staring provocatively into the camera. Since consumer-directed advertising of pharmaceuticals is illegal in Canada, I wondered what this drug ad was doing on a university bulletin board.

No doubt designed to entice university students of both genders to start worrying about something they’ve probably never even heard of – HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) – it included this bold stat that helpfully stokes fear: “It is estimated that 75% of sexually active Canadians will have at least one HPV infection during their lifetime.” After making the link between HPV, cervical cancer and genital warts, the poster hits the students with the sales hook – I’m paraphrasing here – “Come on down and get your Gardasil 9 vaccinations and your student health plan will save 80% of the cost!” For debt rattled students, the chance of saving \$400 must surely be very enticing because, well, genital warts? Oooh, gross.

The grossest thing about this poster was the missing safety information related to the vaccine. But if you looked closely, you could see it had been covered up, as was the manufacturer’s name, Merck, with a sticker showing the potential cost savings. The headline “Gardasil is available at UVIC Health Services for Men and Women” was followed by how the three-dose regime of the Gardasil 9 vaccine would cost students \$480 out of pocket but only \$96 with their undergraduate Extended Health Plan. What a bargain!

If you held the poster up to the light, you could just make out the safety information. In this case, the vaccine was related to a number of minor things and the classic cover-all statement, “As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a serious injury or death.”

What you don’t see on this poster is that Gardasil 9 is a highly controversial vaccine. Yet UVic’s communications spokesperson wondered why I thought the vaccines were controversial. He wrote to me, stating, “While the posters reference a specific drug manufacturer, the overall awareness message is one that benefits students in making an informed decision about immunization.” In a milieu that teaches critical thinking, do we really expect pharma’s propaganda to lead to more informed decision-making?

In my world of researchers, the university’s attitude seems quaint and naive given that many people world-

wide consider the HPV vaccines to be poster children for “controversial.” Even though it’s designed to prevent infection by some strains of the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV), the vaccine has yet been proven to reduce cervical cancer rates. And the potential for harm is real and troubling.

Evidence from the company-sponsored, randomized trials used to approve the vaccine have shown it was generally safe, but ‘real world’ experience has been very different. In the US, for example, up to the end of September 2015, there were 37,474 adverse reaction reports made to the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) associated with Gardasil. These reports include 209 deaths. What does one make of this? It’s unclear because these deaths are deemed ‘associations’ and one cannot conclude the vaccine alone was directly responsible.

**One in 10 Gardasil users were either admitted to a hospital or an emergency room within 42 days of injection.**

An Alberta study looking at adverse events following HPV vaccination from 2006 to 2014 found that one in 10 Gardasil users were either admitted to a hospital or an emergency room within 42 days of injection. And you can’t ignore groups like SaneVax and others around the globe that were created to deal with HPV vaccine-injured daughters.

Many scientists have been critical of the research and propaganda surrounding the HPV. A group who wrote in the journal *Infectious Agents and Cancer* said the two basic premises – “that HPV vaccines will prevent cervical cancers and save lives and have no risk of serious side effects” – are likely wrong. They note, “Careful analysis of HPV vaccine pre-and post-licensure data shows, however, that both of these premises are at odds with factual evidence...”

UVic is certainly not the only – or first – university in Canada to allow flagrant marketing of vaccines or drugs of dubious effectiveness and safety. I can think of two recent controversies and the targets again are young women.

Between 2002-2004, if you were in a women’s washroom in a Canadian university or college, you would’ve seen an ad for a drug featuring a glowing, healthy young woman with a shimmering smile and the caption: “Diane-35. Ask your doctor or your dermatologist.” Diane-35 contained two hormones: cyproterone acetate and ethinyl estradiol. The manufacturer, Berlex, advertised it on TV, in bus shelters and on posters at universities. Outraged colleagues of mine wrote letters

to Health Canada asking why they were allowing the marketing of such a controversial drug in universities. Controversial, you say?

Everyone – except those who approve posters in the ivory tower – knew about the very dark cloud surrounding Diane-35, which came to Canada in 1998, but was never approved in the US due to safety concerns. After the death of a young woman in Germany from liver cancer linked to the drug, it was restricted in the rest of Europe and in Canada because of suggestions it was toxic to the liver and only recommended as a second-line drug for women with severe acne. Evidence from at least eight studies showed Diane-35 increased the risk of VTE – venous thrombotic events, or blood clots – more than other commonly used birth control pills. Even though Health Canada required the manufacturer to send a letter to all doctors in Canada stating that Diane-35 increased risks of blood clots, the drug was merrily advertised in Canadian universities, including UVic.

Monitoring these events, my colleague Barbara Mintzes at UBC wrote a paper in 2004 entitled, “Drug regulatory failure in Canada: The case of Diane-35.” She wrote, “The Diane-35 advertising campaigns make a mockery of claims that direct-to-consumer advertising educates the public about health treatments. These ads omit the key information young women need to know about this product: that safer alternatives are available.”

Then there’s the more recent case of Yaz or Yasmin, another birth control pill flaunted on campuses, including here at UVic. Like Diane-35, Yasmin increased the risk of venous thromboembolism (blood clots), was more risky than second-generation, older oral contraceptives and no more effective than other birth control pills.

Even though Yaz and Yasmin were touted to treat acne, the drugs weren’t proven to do that. After a short time on the market – but advertised more widely than any other birth control pill – blood clots, heart attacks, strokes and two dozen deaths in Canada were reported. Most of the victims were under 25. A Canadian class action lawsuit followed with more than 1,700 women registering with a Toronto law firm that they had been hurt by Yaz and Yasmin and were seeking compensation.

We know who benefits from widespread marketing of potentially unsafe products to students. But who at our universities and colleges is protecting students from the spin of pharma’s dangerous and potentially deadly marketing strategies? ❖

**Alan Cassels** is a pharmaceutical policy researcher in Victoria and author of the just-published **The Cochrane Collaboration: Medicine’s Best Kept Secret**. Follow him on Twitter at @akecassels



# Where is the Justice for Stephan family?

There's something happening here

by Ian Stewart



In 1966 the band Buffalo Springfield wrote a great protest song in response to some repressive laws of their day.

*There's something happening here  
What it is ain't exactly clear  
There's a man with a gun over there  
Telling me I got to beware"  
Paranoia strikes deep  
Into your life it will creep  
It starts when you're always afraid  
You step out of line, the man comes and  
takes you away"  
I think it's time we stop, children, what's  
that sound  
Everybody look what's going down"*

A lot has changed over these last 50 years, but for David and Collet Stephan, a lot remains the same. There is something happening here, and what it is is not exactly clear. Their crime is being highly aware of the benefits of a holistic lifestyle for themselves and their children, and being active in the use and promotion of nutritional and herbal supplements. They even went so far as to support their son Ezekiel through a bout of croup and the flu over a two-week period with natural remedies. He later died of what the Crown alleged was Bacterial Meningitis.

David and Collet were found guilty

on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 of the charge of failing to provide the necessities of life to their late son Ezekiel. In a nutshell: The Crown asserted they did not take Ezekiel to a doctor soon enough. Later in June, a time will be set for when "the man comes and takes (them) away". They each face a maximum sentence of 5 years. However, what isn't a widely known fact in the reporting of their case is that the investigating authorities at the time of Ezekiel's crisis (2012), namely RCMP Constable Beauford, and Child Protective Services, concluded that this was a sad tragedy - not a crime. They closed their files with no recommendation for charges. So, why are they now facing this sentence?

Nearly a year after the investigation, the Crown laid the charge anyways, and strangely, the autopsy took an unusual 7 ½ months to be written. The Crown's theory was that David and Collet endangered Ezekiel's life by not vaccinating him, and by treating bacterial meningitis with natural remedies (playing doctor), until Ezekiel was so weak and fragile he stopped breathing. Then, and only then, the Crown claims, his parents called for medical help. However, the Crown's theory unraveled during the trial.

First, they took the vaccination issue off the table completely, because of the expert witnesses Defense had lined up.

Vaccination is not mandatory in Canada, nor is it sound science. Then, their attempts to smear the character of Ezekiel's parents failed. These are the kind of parents we want in society: They are loving and attentive.

Next the Crown attempted to posit an erroneous idea that multivitamins, olive leaf extract, MSM, horseradish, garlic and hot peppers were used to treat Bacterial Meningitis. To mom and dad and their Registered Nurse friend, Ezekiel had croup, and got well. He got a flu, and got well. He was slow to recover to his full energetic self, and showed no signs of Bacterial Meningitis. The witnesses who saw him at church, home, and playschool stated this. As his parents were told, Ezekiel would likely be sent home from the hospital with a mild flu. They sought to boost his immune system with Echinacea.

Collet emotionally asserted during trial that no one wants a different outcome more than her and David. Can any

of us claim foresight? Not one of the doctors during this trial could assure the court of an absolute ability to have diagnosed meningitis in Ezekiel.

The Crown's seemingly bedrock evidence was Dr. Adeago's medical examiner's report. However, it failed as well. Expert witness Dr. Sauvageau, a forensic pathologist and a previous Chief Medical Examiner for Alberta, dissolved this report with her own review of the autopsy and histological evidence.

Ezekiel's brain tissue showed clear signs of oxygen deprivation consistent with an ambulance mishap that occurred the night 911 was called for Ezekiel. At the time the paramedics were unable to get air to the child because of missing equipment. The ambulance was de-stocked of vital airway equipment against the advice of the paramedics for over a year. Alberta Health Services re-stocked the equipment one week after this incident.

There was also *continued p.15...*

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# Confinement agriculture

## the brutality of industrial meat

Unlike many issues related to modern life, in terms of our food, the future is fundamentally in our hands. Deciding to put our money where our mouths are constitutes an important factor in personal and planetary survival. And more and more people are aware of an incessant, essential wake-up call.

One of most important voices emerging in this exponentially growing chorus of global awareness is Sonia Faruqi. Her book, *Project Animal Farm: An Accidental Journey Into the Secret World of Farming and the Truth About our Food*, is unprecedented. Sonia shared her insights with *Common Ground* and has offered to answer any questions our readers may have.

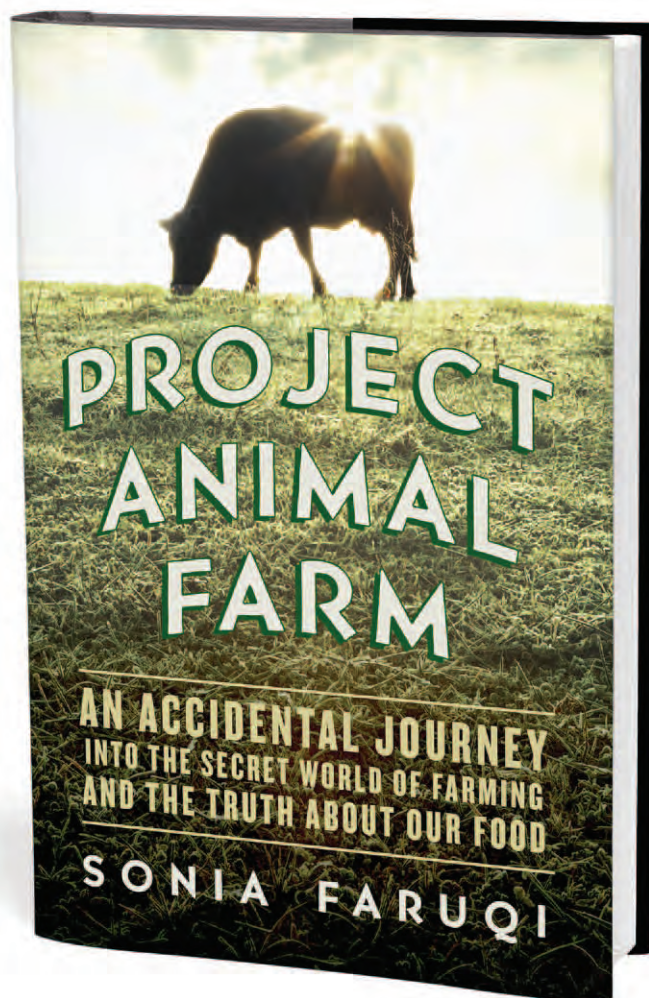
First, high praise: Frances Moore Lappé (*Diet for a Small Planet*) says, “Brave, captivating, enlightening and impossible to put down, this remarkable true story pries open hearts and minds and exposes the travesty of industrial farming like no other.” Nobel laureate (literature) J. M. Coetzee writes, “Engaging adventures to smuggle a body of useful – and disturbing – information about this most secretive global enterprise.” Prominent food activist John Robbins (*The Food Revolution*) adds, “Every so often, a book comes along with power to alter the course of history. *Project Animal Farm* is that potent. People will be talking about this book for decades.”

After graduating *cum laude* from the prestigious ivy league Dartmouth College (Economics/Public Policy), Faruqi was immediately scooped up as an analyst by a Wall Street investment bank. After several years of cab hopping, success and excess and 70-hour workweeks – eating breakfast, lunch and dinner at her cubicle – it all came to a screeching halt in the 2008 crash. Her dream job and hyper-urban existence ended abruptly and she reunited with her family in Toronto.

On a whim, she volunteered for a two-week working vacation at a dairy farm near her home. What she saw there shocked her to the core and catalyzed her four-year adventure and mission of visiting 60 farms in eight countries, but she had no intention of writing a book or a militant exposé. Often showing up unannounced, always pleasant and non-threatening, but insistent, she hitchhiked, risked her life and kept a journal about her journey. It led to her becoming an exceptional storyteller with a tale unlike any other.

CG: Can you put all of this in context?

SF: More than 70 billion animals are reared in the



world for food, annually. In 2013, 8.5 billion chickens, 239 million turkeys, 112 million pigs, 32 million cattle and 2 million sheep and lambs were killed for human consumption in the US and Canada. According to government, individual Canadians now eat, on average, 255 pounds of meat, eggs and fish a year. That doesn't include dairy, which adds up to 300 pounds, a huge number. Unquestionably, there's a toll on the Earth and human health.

CG: Many of us have some sense of the “deepest, darkest recesses of international animal agriculture,” but were you particularly naive?

SF: I had never been on a farm, certainly not an industrial farm or slaughterhouse. I was curious about food and fond of cows grazing on green, rolling hills with idyllic, quaint antique barns and homes in the background, like ubiquitous scenes on labels and websites. But my plans for a picnic got caught in a thunderstorm. I had no idea what I was getting into: a foreign country with its own customs and rituals. Cows were tethered in stalls at the neck and trained with electric shocks to defecate in a gutter. Part of me was repulsed, but another

side, seeing comparisons and solutions, won out.

CG: What is what you call “confinement agriculture”?

SF: It sums up our situation. Learning in a sensory way is completely different than being aware, generally. I was already vegetarian and had some inkling, but actually smelling, hearing and feeling is very different than say, disjointed videos and photographs. The smells built up from all the manure are unimaginable, an overwhelming sensory experience. The ammonia gets to the back of your throat. You cough, your eyes start tearing. A regular person would likely vomit outside tightly closed doors. But I stumbled into this highly secretive world and industry, previously under-reported, if at all, certainly without recommendations for change.

The worst are egg-laying hen cages and sow crates; animals can hardly move, trapped firmly in place, in human terms, like being glued to a chair for a lifetime. At an egg factory farm where I stayed, hens were trapped in thousands of cages, the size of a microwave, and this cage confined four or five hens, de-beaked, bare of feathers with wings like lumpy stumps. Their large feet flailed through the air comically as they shrieked in my hands. They were ghostly caricatures, harmless, but terrifying to witness in their harmlessness.

For all practical purposes, North America has become Asia's pig factory farm. Inside, when lights are turned on, gestating sows rise, biting the bars of their crates, smashing their heads against them, sentient, but claustrophobic – insane sows, confined so their flesh extrudes through bars and legs poke into neighbours' flesh. Their screaming rang through the fecal fog and still haunts me.

**“The single, biggest action to fight climate change – more than not driving, taking shorter showers or living without electricity – is to modify our diet to [eat] less industrial meat.” – Sonia Faruqi**

As well, antibiotics are very commonly used to balloon growth, mixed into chicken feed, a serious problem and grave concern, especially in Asia, where long-term consequences are already more commonplace. The industry claims to be strong and healthy, but rather than a vigorous young man bursting with life, I found a paranoid, senile old man living in terror that encounters with outsiders would spell his death.

CG: You wrote an article for *Atlantic* magazine enti-



tled “Agriculture Needs More Women.” What’s the “grass ceiling?”

**SF:** Gender diversity is good in and of itself, but there are far too few women in agriculture, most notably in management. I’ve studied lots of data about biological and psychological differences. Women have more compassion and empathy, a different mindset. They’re more likely to search for healthy food and be concerned about animal treatment, food safety and security.

**CG:** What makes high meat consumption not only unhealthy, unsustainable and inhumane, but also entirely unnecessary?



Sonia Faruqi

**SF:** The future is already here, but not evenly distributed. Animals are treated well in some places. I’ve seen it in Indonesian villages, on farms in Belize and on what I term ‘pastoral farms.’ Different countries are at very different stages, evolving and transitioning, as well as painstakingly copying US fast-food outlets and suppliers.

I’m the first to conclude large pastoral farms are the answer. They have economies of scale, but can’t match the extreme volume – or violence – of factory farms. We must also reduce meat consumption as we transform production.

Cutting costs for profit currently determines animal conditions. The industry is one of the biggest and most destructive on the planet, but environmentalists have focused on fossil fuel. People think they have no choice. The

reality is millions of people live entirely plant-based lifestyles and are thriving. Still, politicians subsidize factory farms and feedlots, pass ag-gag laws instead of regulations. And inspections and labels are meaningless, a deliberate strategy of agribusiness.

The single, biggest action to fight climate change – more than not driving,

taking shorter showers or living without electricity – is to modify our diet to [eat] less industrial meat. I have no doubt veganism will eventually replace meat. Like other fallen ‘isms’ such as sexism and racism, carnism is contrary to human values and nature. Each of us is endowed with the power of choice; we just have to make right ones. It starts

with consumers agreeing to eat lower on the food chain.

**CG:** Easier said than done. Let’s give *Common Ground* readers an opportunity to ask questions and highlight your recommendations and advice next month. ◀

Email questions to [brucemason@shaw.ca](mailto:brucemason@shaw.ca) For more information, visit [www.soniafaruqi.com](http://www.soniafaruqi.com)

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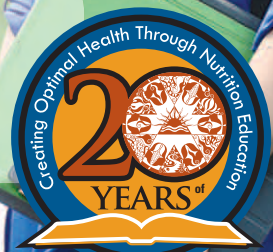
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**HEALTH**



# Dairy-free and delicious

**L**ast month, I had the pleasure of being a presenter at the Dairy-Free Living course – complete with tastings – at Vancouver's Central Library. One thing is now clear: there is an abundance of delicious, healthful dairy alternatives.

Vancouver is home to several independent non-dairy milk and nut-based companies that produce a pleasing array of cheeses. There's also a completely vegan ice cream shop: Nice Vice. Many ice creameries offer vegan alternatives, including Ernest Ice Cream, which serves outstanding lemon and chocolate vegan options.

People often confide they would like to go  
vegan, but they just can't give up cheese.

While in the past, non-dairy cheese could be pretty dismal, very appealing products are now found in mainstream supermarkets and natural food stores. One can find Earth Island products, other non-dairy cheeses, mayo and even cheesecakes. Also explore the Parthenon Supermarket's wonderful assortment on West Broadway.

One highlight is Miyoko's Creamery, which sells products online. Their highly acclaimed, cultured, nut-based (organic, GMO-free) cheeses offer a taste experience enjoyed by even the most critical dairy fans. Textures include hard and soft cheeses with rich and compelling flavours. I had the opportunity to attend a vegan 'wine and cheese' party in San Francisco, catered by Miyoko herself, and was amazed that the flavours of many dairy-based favourites have been replicated or even surpassed. While sampling, I realized it is not milk that makes cheese what it is, but the culturing process. Alternatives can be based on cashews – most frequently used – that are carefully cultured and seasoned. Check out the variety of products at [www.vegansupply.ca](http://www.vegansupply.ca)

People often confide they would like to go vegan, but they just can't give up cheese. Some are uncomfortable with the distress experienced by cows and calves when separated after birth so humans can have the milk. A few are aware that, after a dairy cow's high productivity drops, she is sent to the slaughterhouse, typically to become hamburger meat. Her lifespan is about six years instead of the normal 18 or so. Dairy production involves repeated, forced impregnations. The male calves, unable to become milk producers, experience short, confined lives before becoming veal. Environmentalists are becoming aware that choosing to rely on animals for food can have a negative impact even greater than our transportation choices.

Yet when delicious, satisfying and sustainable alternatives are available that neither harm animals nor boost one's cholesterol levels – it's win-win-win!

Another lively new trend is the booming popularity of tasty and quick vegan restaurant food. The two locations of Meet (on Main and now in Gastown) are packed most nights with people enjoying their award-winning veggie burgers and comfort food.

The demand and growth of vegan foods is apparent at major chains as well. Nearly all grocery stores stock non-dairy milks, ice creams and meatless products like Gardein. It used to be a real feat to find a pizza place with vegan cheese; Now, there's Vegan Pizza House, Panago's and more.

[www.meetup.com/meatlessmeetup](http://www.meetup.com/meatlessmeetup) frequently hosts events in Vancouver and sometimes in the Tri-Cities, Surrey and Richmond. People who don't intend to go vegetarian, but who want to lower their eco-footprint are also very welcome. ◀

**Vesanto Melina** is a Vancouver based registered dietitian. [www.nutrispeak.com](http://www.nutrispeak.com), 778-379-5377. **Dave Shishkoff** is an athlete and the founder of [veganstart.org](http://veganstart.org)



...Stephan family from p.11

no Bacterial Meningitis discovered, nor was the right pleural empyema, a type of lung infection as purported by Adeagbo, a cause of death. Ezekiel's lungs became infected after he was intubated in the hospital. Aspiration pneumonia is common with emergency airway interventions. His initial x-ray showed clear and healthy lungs. The Crown did not disclose this to the Defense, nor did it show up in the medical examiners report. Dr. Sauvageau inadvertently discovered this evidence in the medical history and autopsy file several weeks into the trial.

Viral Meningitis was, on the balance of probability, the type of meningitis and likely linked to the enterovirus that caused his croup. Had the asphyxia in the ambulance not occurred, Dr. Sauvageau gave a likely recovery from the viral meningitis at 100%. As a sure cause of death, the paramedic misadventure has been down played, and the Crown has asserted only theories in its place.

So why did the jury find David and Collet guilty? We will never know,

unless one of them comes forward and speaks about their deliberations. In Canada, jurors are off limits to inquiring minds. However, there are clues in the final submissions of the Crown to the jury. The Crown asserted in their close that the Stephan's are good and loving parents, and that they are *not* responsible for the death of their son. "If this were so," the Crown said, "this would be a murder or manslaughter trial". Since the Stephan's character and Ezekiel's cause of death was not as the Crown had proposed at the onset of the trial, they chose to narrow the offense of the law to just a simple premise: Had the parents taken Ezekiel to a doctor sooner, could, not would, the outcome have been different? The jury wept over their verdict. Guilty did not sit well with many of them. David and Collet will be punished for failing to provide necessities to their child, with a sentence that will cause them to fail to provide the necessities to their children. "Everybody look what's going down" ❏

Ian Stewart sicorp@telus.net

For details of this trial visit: [stand4truth.ca](http://stand4truth.ca)

## Justice for Ezekiel?

*Following are two relevant excerpts from Justice for Ezekiel? on the Thinking Mom's Revolution website. The article details many of the facts of this case and asks important questions of precedent-setting interest to Canadians.*

For people who believe that individual freedom to make lifestyle choices, including healthcare, is an important value, the Stephan case has to be an affront. It is predicated upon the idea that there is only one valid approach to healthcare, that which is sponsored by the government. The underlying assumption is that not doing exactly what Health Canada considers appropriate makes one a negligent parent. It may not be obvious how absurd this position is until you consider that "medical misadventure" is not at all unusual. In fact, it is so common now in the United States that medical mistakes in hospitals may be harming up to nine million people a year and killing up to 440,000 of them, making them the third leading cause of death. In addition, pharmaceutical drugs killed 29,471 people in 2013, far more than the 17,000 that were killed by illicit drug use. A 2015 study at Massachusetts General Hospital, generally considered a leader in patient safety, found that medication errors occurred in nearly half of all surgical procedures. In 2009, more than half of the nearly 4.6 million drug-related visits to U.S. emergency rooms nationwide were due to adverse reactions to prescription drugs, most of which were taken as prescribed. At a medical conference, a Harvard professor "looked out at a room of 2,000 doctors and asked 'How many of you know of another doctor who should not be practicing because he is too dangerous?' Every hand went up.

And if they were deliberately misrepresenting facts, why would they do so? One clue may be the cause of death according to Dr. Sauvageau: medical misadventure. According to Dr. Sauvageau, Ezekiel had the croup and meningitis, probably due to enterovirus. While they can cause breathing obstruction, they are very rarely fatal, and the likelihood is that with proper intubation Ezekiel would have survived. The

lack of appropriate equipment on board the ambulance meant that Ezekiel's lungs, and more importantly his brain cells, were deprived of oxygen for an extra eight minutes. This lack of oxygen according to Dr. Sauvageau was the reason Ezekiel died. Oddly, Dr. Adeagbo left out any discussion of anoxia (lack of oxygen) in the autopsy report and argued at trial against anoxic damage because he didn't see the characteristic pink color associated with that type of injury. According to Dr. Sauvageau, though, that color is a short-term phenomenon, on the order of hours (references cited), and would not have been expected to be present five days after the initial injury. Wouldn't one expect the medical examiner performing the autopsy to know that? Is it possible, therefore, that the Crown's case against the Stephans is more about covering up their own culpability for not providing the proper equipment for handling respiratory arrest in a child than it is about any real negligence on the part of the parents? The apparent misrepresentation of autopsy evidence and the absence of an exonerating chest x-ray in discovery material would make that scenario seem likely. ❏

For the entire 4500 word article on this critically important precedent-setting case, which affects every single Canadian please go to <http://thinkingmomsrevolution.com/justice-for-ezekiel/>

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# GMO BITES

## Dr. Thierry Vrain challenges Science 2.0

*Dr. Thierry Vrain continues to speak about the dangers of GMOs. He was scheduled to give a lecture at the Museum of Science in Houston in April, but it was cancelled because of a last-minute storm of emails and a prominent blog by professor Kevin Folta of the University of Florida. The developing saga was posted on his Facebook page. Dr. Vrain's reply (April 8, 2016) to professor Folta is excerpted below:*

Dear Professor Folta:

Your blog, posted on your website [www.science20.com](http://www.science20.com), succeeded in cancelling my lecture at the Museum of Science in Houston. Rice University – next door – was eager to host the lecture and provided its media centre with excellent facilities, so no damage done, other than attracting the attention of the local press, as that kind of cancellation was so far unknown in Houston.

I appreciated your enthusiasm to “debunk junk GMO science,” but your remarks were misplaced, as I am not participating in the controversy about the genetic engineering technology. What I speak publicly about is the pollution of our food crops and contamination of our food with the herbicide RoundUp. I start my lecture by describing the molecule and its various uses (patents) then comment on a few papers showing toxicity.

I begin with a statement from the American Academy of Environmental Medicine, a group of medical

doctors that took a public position in 2009 and requested a moratorium on engineered foods, based on their readings of scientific studies showing oxidative stress, infertility, immune system dysregulation, accelerated

**Extreme residue levels of glyphosate in food crops are now considered legal and normal... Residues of antibiotic glyphosate higher than one part per million in our food could result in damages to the microbiome and lead to epidemics of chronic illnesses like autism, diabetes, Alzheimer's and cancer.**

aging and changes in the gastrointestinal tract, including liver and kidney failure. These are MDs – perhaps not real scientists, but they can read animal studies.

I continue by explaining that most engineered crops today are RoundUp Ready. Yes, there are other crops

engineered to resist pests or diseases, or with better nutrient profiles or engineered to tolerate environmental conditions or to reduce spoilage, but most of them are still on a minuscule acreage or still on the shelf. Most GMO crops today have been engineered with a bacterial gene to confer resistance to glyphosate. GMOs are Glyphosate Modified Organisms.

I speak of the origins of this molecule patented by Stauffer Chemicals in 1964 as a descaling agent, a chemical that cleans up the mineral scales in industrial pipes and boilers. In chemistry and biology we call it a powerful chelator. I go briefly over the phosphonic acid part of the molecule. And also glyphosate as an amino acid analog, easily mistaken and incorporated into proteins.

It did not take many years for somebody at the chemical corporation Monsanto to figure out that a chemical that kills bacteria and plants can make a lot more money if sold as an herbicide rather than as a descaling agent. The Patent Office granted a patent for a new use in 1969. The formulated herbicide was marketed in 1974 under the brand name RoundUp, a powerful and non-selective herbicide that kills plants and bacteria by shutting down their protein biochemical pathways, a wonderful product that has, in theory, no animal toxicity because animals do not have the vulnerable pathways.

The game changed in 1996 with the release of soy and corn RoundUp Ready crops *continued p.27...*

## HELP MAKE IT STOP



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# NEWSBITES

## Help outlaw cosmetic animal testing and trade

At the beginning of the year, the #BeCrueltyFree Canada team introduced the Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Act. Help this bill become law and sign the petition at [www.hsi.org](http://www.hsi.org) Select Canada as your country and then type Cruelty Free Cosmetics Act Petition in the search bar.

Ask your Member of Parliament to  
support the Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Act  
by signing and sharing the petition.

This bill would make it illegal to test cosmetic products or ingredients on animals in Canadian labs and also ban the sale of beauty products newly tested on animals anywhere in the world.

Ask your Member of Parliament to support the Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Act (S-214) by signing and sharing the petition.

With your help, HSI has been giving the beauty industry a cruelty-free makeover in Europe, India, New Zealand and South Korea. Now it's Canada's turn and this progressive bill brings us one step closer to achieving a world where no animal has to suffer

and die for the sake of cosmetics.

Add your name today to make an even bigger impact. Together, we can make Canada the next country to #BeCrueltyFree!

Source: *HSI Canada (Humane Society International/Canada)*, [www.hsi.org](http://www.hsi.org)

## Testing reveals glyphosate in popular breakfast foods

In April, the Alliance for Natural Health-USA (ANH-USA) released the results of food safety testing conducted on popular breakfast foods. Testing revealed the presence of glyphosate – the most widely used agricultural herbicide and the primary ingredient in the popular herbicide Round Up – in 11 of the 24 food samples tested.

Glyphosate is an herbicide developed in 1970 by Monsanto, which began developing GMO crops designed to withstand high doses of Roundup. Today, these seeds account for 94% of all soybeans and 89% of all corn being produced, meaning that hundreds of millions of pounds of glyphosate are dumped onto the land every year.

“We decided to do this testing to see just how ubiquitous this toxin has become in our environment. We expected that trace amounts would show up in foods containing large amounts of corn and soy,” explained Gretchen DuBeau, executive and

legal director of ANH-USA. “However, we were unprepared for just how invasive this poison has been to our entire food chain.”

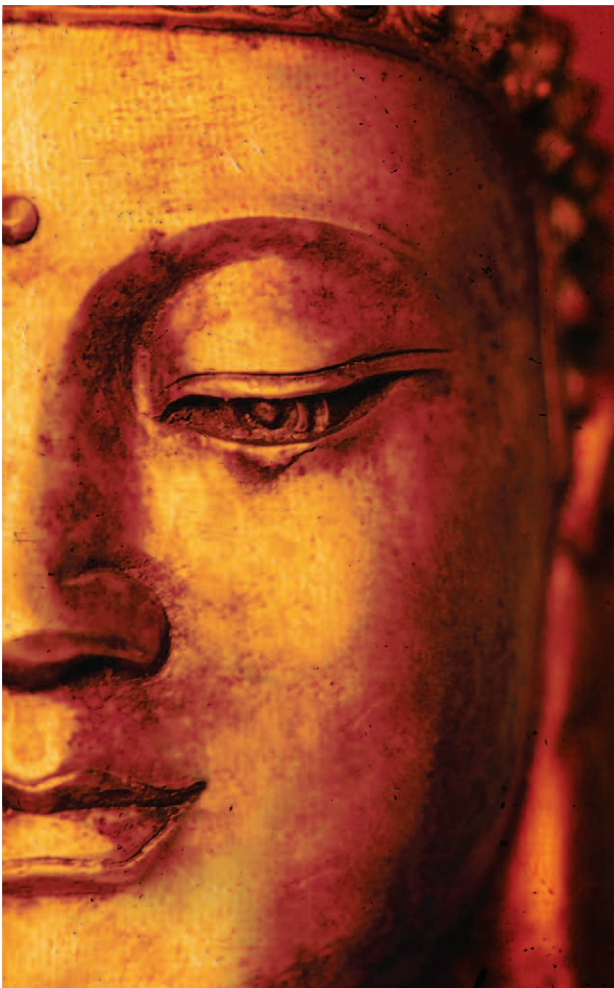
This poison was recently named a probable carcinogen, or cancer-causing agent, by the World Health Organization. Glyphosate was found in oatmeal, bagels, eggs – including the organic variety – potatoes and even non-GMO soy coffee creamer.

“Glyphosate has been linked to increases in levels of breast, thyroid, kidney, pancreatic, liver and bladder cancers and is being served for breakfast, lunch and dinner around the world,” said DuBeau. “The fact that it is showing up in foods like eggs and coffee creamer, which don’t directly contact the herbicide, shows that it’s being passed on by animals who ingest it in their feed. This is contrary to everything that regulators and industry scientists have been telling the public.”

The true safety of this chemical is unknown. Evidence linking glyphosate with the increased incidence of a host of cancers is reason for immediate reevaluation by the EPA and FDA.

See the full results of the study at [www.anh-usa.org](http://www.anh-usa.org) Search for breakfast study. View a video related to the study at: [www.anh-usa.org/glyphosate-for-breakfast](http://www.anh-usa.org/glyphosate-for-breakfast)

Source: *Alliance for Natural Health USA (ANH-USA)*, [www.anh-usa.org](http://www.anh-usa.org) ☒



# VESAK 2016

## Inner Peace Leads to World Peace

**The United Sangha cordially invites the community to pray together for World Peace**

Every year on the full moon day of the month of May, Buddhists around the world celebrate Vesak (commemoration of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away). Observing this tradition, Buddhist organizations in BC have been celebrating Vesak within their community at large without exception. Starting 2015, the United Sangha, a community of over 40 Buddhist monks and nuns from different Buddhist traditions, hosted a joint Vesak Event in Vancouver, bringing the celebration from within the temples to share with the general public. This year we will pray and meditate for the sake of Inner Peace and World Peace. Admission is free and we will provide a free vegetarian lunch. We will have Buddhist chanting in different languages and various meditation practices to build up positive spiritual energy of all participants so that together we create pure synergy to bring World Peace and take some inner peace home. One of the highlights of the event is the 'Dharma Forum' led by ten Buddhist monks and nuns, who will share from their own practices, their views on the topic, "Inner Peace Leads to World Peace", the who, what and how.



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Please RSVP at  
[www.unitedsangha.org/vesak2016/](http://www.unitedsangha.org/vesak2016/)



Daily, we leave jobs, friends, lovers...  
but the child always comes along



Image © Inara Prusakova

## Scars

by Sallie Tisdale

*The first section of this essay is one of the first essays I wrote, at the age of 22. I added to it – and subtracted – over many years, and finally found a way to put the pieces of my son's life into an order that made sense to me. Into an image that made sense to me – because even now, when he is in his late 30s, I can run my hand over the scar and feel its shape and texture. That skin is not the same as it was before he was born. – Sallie Tisdale*

Four years ago he was born and everything changed. Daily, we leave jobs, friends, lovers, but the child always comes along. When the going gets rough, my son and I can't call it quits and cut our losses. I can't pack a bag, make a break for it, find a more compatible child. The contract cannot be broken.

We are strangely entangled. When I wake from a bad dream without a sound, he wakes in the next room and cries for me. Between us, there is no shame, no holding back. I take risks with him I wouldn't dare take with anyone else. I treat him with rough impatience, with all the bile I hide from friends and lovers for fear of losing them. I am less tolerant of deviation, more injured by separation. We fight and then make up with a tentative, weary kiss. I

demand so much: loyalty, obedience, faith. And he gives me all I demand, and more – he thinks me beautiful; he wants to grow up to be just like me. And I am bound to fail him, and bound to lose him.

Strangers' hands will stroke where I stroke now, and already I'm jealous of this secret future apart from me. I quail at the mistakes I'm bound to make, what I'll saddle him with, what the price for each of us will finally be. For nothing is free.

Daily, the gap between us grows, in tiny steps. He is not mindful of it – but I am. Oh, I am. I'll give the world a son, heavy with the grief of giving him at all. Then and after, he'll drift in and out of my view, keeping secrets, neglecting me, while I watch from a distance, unrequited.

My mother shows up, startling me. When I speak to my son, I repeat what she told me, the phrases and platitudes, in the same tone of voice and inflection I heard as a child. She is my forebearer; I am his inheritance, and will prevail despite his efforts. Years from now I'll show up, a sudden surprise.

Could my own mother have felt this fierce love for me? I treat her so casually. If she ever felt this way, it seems she should be grieved – bereft by my distance. Can it be that she misses me? We don't speak of such things: our closest contacts are narrowly averted, sudden swerves from danger. Will it be the same for my son and me, the boy who now crawls like a spoiled child-prince across my lap?

He's tall now, and lean: when he comes running toward me, breathless from some grand injustice or new idea, I see his ribs pressing against the skin, light and shadow. He takes deep, thoughtless breaths, free of blemish, taut and promising. He has my brother's face, a handsome face, and he wears his lucky muscles with negligence and not a whit of gratitude. He is eight years old.

Sudden sufficiency. What binds us is less visible, as though we'd been cloven in two. I would not have thought it possible to feel so halved. I can wonder now what it is like to be him – wonder and know I'll never know. What does he think in a privacy I can hardly bear, a privacy that seems entirely unfair? I am still the dictator of this tiny country; he is still my subject, but he dreams of revolution.

I may not kiss him in front of others anymore. He holds the car door for me, calls me "Ma'am," with a giggle. He has great white teeth, dark circles below his eyes, a scratch on his cheek, dirt in the lines of his neck. He wants his hair cut "like Elvis Presley," he wants it cut "like Michael Jackson," he wants a Mohawk. He sings commercial jingles for hamburgers and jeans and toothpaste while he builds elaborate block constructions; he strews his room with Viewmasters and action figures ("They're not dolls, Mom," he says in irritation) and books and dirty socks and sheets. He is, above all, busy; I am tired.

"You are," he tells me, "more beautiful than the women in *Playboy*," and he's out the door before I can ask where he saw *Playboy*.



How does he know the exact inflection? He has the same disgust and injured dignity I felt all those years ago, dying a thousand deaths in the face of my mother's twittering concerns. He comes into his own and it is my turn to be out-of-date, to be shocked, to drone on long after he ceases to hear me.

I am, he tells me, so *old*.

The neighbor boys tease him and he runs home in a paroxysm of despair: "No one likes me," he sobs, and lends to his crying a thorough attention. What courage children have. I lead him to the dentist and he climbs shakily in the great chair, looks at me and asks me to spare him this. I won't; seeing my refusal, he turns away. He wants me to keep him a baby, he doesn't know that I would if I could. Already I am separate. He looks at me and sees – only me.

He is an infant again, arms around my thighs, moaning with love, whining for cereal, a story, my lap. But he's too lanky, too long, for my lap; his elbows get in the way of the book. Then he looks for the mysterious pleasures of adulthood: freedom, mobility, explanations. But his brow furrows when he calculates the cost.

At night, he is drenched in protest. He licks his teeth clean, stumbles out of the bathroom in a dirty t-shirt and yesterday's underwear; crawls over the mess on the floor of his room, and hides his stuffed bunny shamefully under the covers. I wait. And when he falls into the humid sleep of children, that greenhouse dark, I slip stealthily in beside him and stroke his honey hair. He sprawls out, clutching the bunny; I balance on the edge, listening to the ruffled quiver of his breaths. I stroke the fear; my fear, of his life, his death. When I contemplate the space he takes up, how vast its emptiness would be, my heart shakes like a rabbit in the jaws of the wolf. I watch his face turned soft with sleep, the smile that skips across his face as he turns smug and safe, and I can see that he's dreaming. He dreams without me now; we dream different dreams.

The balance is shifting. I withdraw sometimes; I want to read my book or be alone when he craves my attention. He will always live with me, he says, or perhaps next door. A transparent gift of beauty is evolving in his bones and skin, beauty made of equal parts grace and pain; I see that he will have a face of triumphant perfection if he wants. And I see the bruises rising under his skin from life's blows. I know he won't live next door, and I'm glad. I don't think I can bear to watch. Right now, I can't remember life without him – I can't remember myself without him, but the time will come.

I put my book aside and wander to his room to watch him play. I find him reading a book, curled in a corner. "Would you mind leaving, Mom?" he says, hardly glancing up. "I feel like being alone."

I wait in the car in the grocery store parking lot, watching the bright automatic doors in my rearview mirror. It is almost ten o'clock at night, much later than usual for me to be out shopping. For 15 years, I've been confined to childish hours. But everything changes.

I see him walk out the middle set of doors, which slide silently apart and then close behind him. He is tall,

several inches taller than me, slender, graceful, arrogant. He wears his thick hair in a high tuft, dyed boot-black, and his black leather silver-studded jacket swings open with each long step.

I used to have crushes on boys like him.

We all have blows – we learn to expect a few, to roll in the force of life's first. That awful job, that last paycheck, the broken heart, the broken nose. All the broken promises no one has even made yet – wounds that can't be helped. I don't have to fear failing him anymore – I already have. What's done is done.

But I hadn't expected this. I hadn't expected to be knocked to my knees in grief when he marches out after I tell him to stay, when he slams the door and disappears, and I drive through dark streets seeking him, and find him smoking in the park with the silent, leggy girlfriend who won't speak to me at all. I draw myself up, demand *decency, respect*; they stare, and whisper to each other.

And I hadn't expected the sorry business of petty crime. He's been arrested for shoplifting – for stealing candy bars, for stealing cigarettes, for stealing condoms. I drive to juvenile hall again and face the disapproving



Strangers' hands will stroke where I  
stroke now, and already I'm jealous  
of this secret future apart from me.

I quail at the mistakes I'm bound  
to make, what I'll saddle him with,  
what the price for each of us will  
finally be. For nothing is free.

eyes behind bulletproof glass, and sign the papers, and wait outside until I'm joined by a raggedy, rude, foul-mouthed boy I hardly know. We drive home in silence and as we walk in the door I tell him to wash the dishes and he says, "No," and I say it again and he refuses again and then adds, mockingly, "And I don't want to have to say it again." And suddenly I'm soaked with white rage, a face-slapping high-dive, and I'm inches from his face brandishing the nearest object, yelling, "Don't you dare, don't you dare, don't you dare speak to me that way."

When we're calm, I can see he thinks I miss the point, the urgent momentum of growing up. I seem to have no ground, nothing to rely upon. He calls me a "disagreeable old hag" at the dinner table and suddenly it makes me laugh. It's so absurd. I saw my parents' anguish in my own small crimes from a cool distance; I remember their stupefaction. I drew up painful words for them deliberately like poison into a syringe. Children grow into strangers who disappoint and perplex us, having long wakened to disillusionment with us. They seem

oblivious to our loss – after all, they've lost nothing.

We are their parents. And now it's my turn and I am so sorry now for what I did then.


He disappears for three days and I cannot find him. The fear is horrible, sickening; the remorse and guilt meaningless, confused. Then his girlfriend's mother calls me to tell me he's staying there because we "kicked him out," and I try to tell her it's not true, to send him home so he will work it out with me, and she refuses. She believes him, his tales. I ask her not to shelter him from this.

"I'm going to take care of him," she tells me. "I like him." When he finally returns, we fight round after round, and there's no bell. Every victory is a Pyrrhic victory. 'Baby,' I want to say, 'baby love, I don't know what to do. Show me what to do.' Harsh words again, the stomp of heavy boots up the stairs. From two floors above me, he lets loose a deep-throated cry, an animal cry, and then the noise of something heavy thrown with what seems an irrevocable, rending crash.

Like all the other scars, this one is slowly filling in, closing off. Scars may be tender, or numb, but they are always there. Scars change the shape of things – they wrinkle, tighten, shorten things. I brought this person into the world and everything turned upside-down and all that's happened since has been in some way connected to that event, his birth. The parent-child bond, I know, is truly bondage, and its end is in many ways a liberation, an enormous relief. Here he comes, hat in hand, to claim himself and go.

He is 19, towering above me, his voice booming on the telephone. He is gorgeous. He is not a virgin; he admits that he is in love. He is kind to his little sister, worries about his carefree brother. Every day, changes: he drops out of high school, grabs a quick diploma at the community college, makes plans, finds a job, is shockingly responsible. He gets a checking account and an 800 number and big ideas: conspiracy theories and politics, tales of hidden alien artifacts and government cabals. His union goes on strike and he walks the picket line with all the other working men. He is righteous, indignant, a defender of the weak, and I bite my lip not to laugh and cry at once; oh god, it's the way I was at 19, it's exactly the way I was.

He absents himself delicately from my life.

One day he stops me in the hall, without warning, dragging his foot and looking at the floor, and mumbles, "I'm sorry," and I ask him for what and he says, "Because I was so hard," and without meeting my eyes, he reaches down from his height to hug me awkwardly and adds, "I love you, Mom," and dashes down the stairs and is gone, again. 



**Sallie Tisdale's essay *Scars* won the CASE National Gold Medal for feature writing in the United States. Reprinted from *Violation: Collected essays* by Sallie Tisdale (Hawthorne Books). Originally published in *Portland Magazine*, winter 2003.**





Mac McLaughlin

ZODIAC

# StarWise

May 2016

THE NEW MOON takes place on May 6, in the middle of Taurus. Spring has sprung and everything is beautiful in its own way. The grass is green and the birds and the bees are doing their thing – and so are we. Just as all of nature is compelled to move along the lines of its genetic make up, we are also compelled to move along in accordance to what the planetary deities dream up and dish out. We have collective and personal karma to work out in every moment of our lives.

On one level, the Taurus new Moon indicates a lovely and stabilizing springtime in which everything is fine – and it is. The Sun and the Moon form triangles with Jupiter and Pluto and you can't beat that. It indicates a time of growth and harmonious collective effort to make it all work, as we strive to sort out the myriad complex problems and concerns we face. When we weigh up all of our social, medical, educational, legal and political concerns, we have to admit we still live in the fairest land on the planet. We have freedom, opulence, wealth, education and compassion, for which we must give thanks. And we must give and give some more to the less fortunate among us, as this type of action is the adhesive that makes us a great society.

Taurus represents our values and, at this time, we must evaluate just how we're doing and how we can become even better. Truly, we are a 'showcase nation' with privileges that most of the people on the planet will never experience. Let's give thanks and rejoice in the wonderful collective karma we share. We know it's not all lollipops and roses and we know we have some seriously gritty tasks at hand to clean up the underbelly that needs care and attention as well. The stars are also indicating such work and circumstances. Presently, we are under a Jupiter Saturn square which indicates the stresses regarding the legal and political complexities of the time. Things are intense and will be that way for some time to come. In the big picture, we are in the midst of a revolutionary time. As upsetting as that is, when we see some of the inhumanity to our own kind, one day we will be past it and we will live in peace. Yes, peace on Earth to all of the inhabitants and all of our brethren – the furry and feathered kind as well. Until then, there will be no rest.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email [mac@macsstars.com](mailto:mac@macsstars.com) or call 604-731-1109.



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**ARIES** Mar 21 - Apr 19

The month starts off at a good pace with very good circumstances developing from May 3 to 6. Personal and financial gains are indicated. You should up your game and make your presence known on May 4. Do something new and adventurous. May 30 and 31 are excellent days for you as well.



**TAURUS** Apr 20 - May 21

It's your time to shine. A new cycle begins on May 6. Life may seem magical and your personal magnetism is very strong. If half of this prediction comes through, you will be doing real fine. Don't spend too much time preening your feathers though, as you have work to do and serious decisions to make.



**GEMINI** May 22 - Jun 20

You have a tricky course to navigate, especially on May 7 and 8. Diplomacy and kind words are essential in order for you to experience success. The cut from a sword heals in time, but a cut from the tongue may fester for a lifetime. The clouds part in the last week of May.



**CANCER** Jun 21 - Jul 22

Circle May 10 on your calendar, as this is probably the best day of the month for Cancer. The day could fly by easily without much notice, but you should make it notable by doing something special and unique. Actually, and generally, the whole month holds very good potential and you should make good use of it.



**LEO** Jul 23 - Aug 22

You've got your challenges and hills to climb throughout the month. Much of the work and concern seem to be around career objectives. Take your time and take some time to consider your options. Truth and honour get you through. Goodwill mixed with your will power are the ingredients that spell success.



**VIRGO** Aug 23 - Sep 22

Special circumstances develop on May 10 that will need your keen attention and timing to capitalize on the opportunities presented. You could just lay back and have a good time, but that would be a waste of time and opportunity. May 15 is a special day in which good times are had. Travel is highlighted.



**LIBRA** Sep 23 - Oct 22

Investments, inheritances, joint monies, wills and legacies are on the cosmic menu for your consideration. Secrets and mysteries may come up on the screen for your perusal. This is a good time to get everything in order, such as taxes and other such matters. Research and metaphysics could be on your mind as well.



**SCORPIO** Oct 23 - Nov 21

It's a complex time for your sign. Not so much negative as it is challenging. The challenge is within your ability to be forthright, honest and direct in all that you do. Any deviation from this line of behaviour could have strong consequences in the months to come. Love, humility, compassion and deep caring are the answers.



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22 - Dec 21

Intense times are onboard. Multiple challenges and layered tasks must be met and dealt with cleanly. Although the lancing of a cyst is never pleasant, it is a relief once the healing begins. The full Moon on May 21 is power packed and will need special care so that emotions don't become overheated.



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22 - Jan 19

The stars are leaning in your favour, but you have to make the moves to make the best out of the situations that arise. It is an overall transformative time in which big changes are taking place. Go with it and reach for the stars. Weigh up what is of true value or not.



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20 - Feb 19

It's time for some inner work on your basic foundation. Speaking of foundations, home and real estate may be on your mind; possibly, a move is in store. Inheritances may figure in as well. You may be hungry for something deeper or more meaningful these days. May 26 is your best day to make decisions.



**PISCES** Feb 20 - Mar 20

It's time to reset your compass, as you may have been blown off course recently. You can make things worse or much better by the decisions you make throughout this month. Challenges? Yes, but you are more than capable of handling them and may even relish the opportunity to do so. Make things right.





# Reverse sexism is divisive too

*When men and women are able to respect and accept their differences, then love has a chance to blossom.* – Nikhil Saluja

There is a subtle – and sometimes not so subtle – kind of discrimination we do not hear too much about. It is the way many women talk about men. It is as if women are far superior to men, who “just don’t get it.”

For many women, the prevailing belief is that men don’t know how to communicate, they don’t know about emotional intimacy and they only want sex, and so on. Even more evolved women subtly denigrate men saying things like, “We support them, but we just have to bring them along.”

Many women see their partners as extensions of themselves. His job is to make her life how she envisions it. His job is to make her happy and if he doesn’t, then – “He’s just not meeting my needs.”

If we labelled a racial or cultural group this way, it would be considered politically incorrect. We talk of men’s sexist behaviour, but we don’t often cite the sexism evident in what women say about men.

**Perhaps we need humanism as much as feminism. Everyone’s needs and rights should be respected, regardless of gender.**

A culturally evolved person accepts differences in race, culture and gender. He or she respects the differences and does not put others down for not being like them. Inclusion is seen as important as is making others feel valued and accepted in our world.

How is it okay then for groups of women to talk about men as though they belonged to a lower species? I recently saw an article that stated in future men would be unnecessary!


I understand that women were not considered equal for a long time and, in some places, are still treated very unequally. I understand we needed to fight to make our voices heard. However, what is the point of finding that voice if we only reverse the polarity?

There are some very good women and very good men in the world. And, yes, there are unevolved men, but there are also unevolved women. We cannot blame an entire gender for the qualities of some of its members.

Women are very open about what they need and they do not hesitate to tell men all about it. Just because men do not express their own emotional needs does not mean they do not have them. An interesting task is to make a list of what we want from our man and then honestly ask ourselves if we are giving those things to him.

Creating polarity does not bring us together; nor does it foster understanding. It creates conflict and distance. Telling someone all the things they are not is pretty harsh and most women would not stand for that from their man. Yet somehow in our culture, it seems okay to say really negative things about men in general.

Because men appear tough and do not cry easily does not mean it is okay to hurt them through our words. Men will often respond to hurt by defensiveness or anger. We can easily blame them for that without owning our part in the process.

Perhaps we need humanism as much as feminism. Everyone’s needs and rights should be respected, regardless of gender. We all belong to the same human family and should be helping and supporting each other. As the late Wayne Dyer said, “In a round world, there are no sides.” 

**Gwen Randall-Young** is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, “Deep Powerful Change”, hypnosis CDs, and “Creating Effective Relationships” series, visit [www.gwen.ca](http://www.gwen.ca) You can also “Like” Gwen on Facebook.

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— Harold Klemp, *The Call of Soul*, p.1



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# Affordable, hi-speed Internet for all

Rural Canadians should not suffer from slow service, sky-high prices and restrictive data caps.

**I**t's too expensive." "It's too slow." "I can't get a reliable connection." All common responses from Canadians when asked what they think about their Internet service. At OpenMedia, not a day goes by without emails, social media messages and phone calls arriving from Canadians unhappy with the state of their Internet.

That's why our team wasn't surprised to see the results of a recent CRTC/EKOS survey, which revealed only one in three Canadians was happy with the cost of their home Internet service and that 20% was forced to limit their Internet usage in order to keep costs down.

We finally have an opportunity to tackle these long-standing problems. In April, the CRTC held detailed hearings examining the question of whether all Canadians should be entitled to affordable, high-speed Internet.

There's no doubt Canada has a lot of catching up to do. The CRTC's current definition of basic services doesn't include broadband or high-speed Internet, but does include an Internet connection "via low-speed data transmission at local rates" along with touch-tone phone service and a printed copy of the local phone book.

OpenMedia took a straightforward message to these

hearings: Canadians deserve better. In our submission, we argued it's time for the government and CRTC to recognize that most Canadians view broadband access as an essential service.

We're not saying everyone should have a Lamborghini. We're simply saying everyone should have access to the same highways – because in 2016, the costs of leaving people behind are just too steep for our society and our economy.

Right now, two significant groups of people are being left on the wrong side of our digital divide: Canadians living in rural and remote areas and low-income Canadians.

Rural Canadians have suffered for years from slow service, sky-high prices and restrictive data caps that make it impossible to use the Internet in ways urban Canadians take for granted. Imagine not being able to stream a Netflix show for fear of using up too much of your monthly data allotment and triggering punitive overage charges.

Broadband is as important to our present and future as the railway was to our past. If Canada is going to realize its full potential, the digital divide between north and south must be bridged to ensure people in Canada's north can spread awareness of issues facing their com-

munities, represent themselves in national decision-making and share their voices, culture and history with the rest of the world.

When it comes to low-income Canadians, the picture is just as bleak. A recent survey by the group ACORN revealed that over 58% of its members had to cut back on food or rent to pay their Internet bill. And the government's own statistics confirm that more than four out of 10 of the lowest-income Canadian families do not have home Internet access, meaning tens of thousands of Canadian children are growing up in homes without this essential educational tool.

Enough is enough. CRTC faces a fork in the road. We can either continue letting our market be regulated by high-cost telecom giants or we can take action to ensure all Canadians can participate in the social and economic benefits of the Internet.

Learn more about our efforts to secure affordable, quality Internet services for all at [UnblockCanada.ca](http://UnblockCanada.ca)

**David Christopher** is communications manager with OpenMedia, which works to keep the Internet open, affordable and surveillance-free. [openmedia.org](http://openmedia.org)

## National Climate Strategy state your views by May 31

**A**t the end of April, the Trudeau Government launched public consultations on its National Climate Strategy, marking a milestone for Canada. Now, we have to make a choice.

On one side, fossil fuel lobbyists supported by Premiers Clark, Nutley and Wall are pushing the Trudeau government to expand Canada's tar sands and fracking industries. If we do this, there's no way for us to do our part to stop catastrophic climate change.

On the other side, millions of people across the country are calling on PM Trudeau to create a climate plan that's based on science, builds a 100% renewable energy economy and ensures a just transition for indigenous people and workers.

Those of us calling for a just transition are losing the fight. PM Trudeau is seriously considering caving to the fossil fuel industry's endless money and power by building new pipelines to expand the tar sands.

These consultations are our chance to turn the tide and ensure Canada goes down the right path, but we only have until the end of May to make our voices heard. That's why we've partnered with nearly 40 national and grassroots organizations to launch a new campaign: the People's Climate Plan.

Find out more and support the People's Climate Plan

at [www.peoplesclimate.ca](http://www.peoplesclimate.ca)

Our goal is simple: flood the climate consultations to show that people across the country are ready for a bold climate plan that makes Canada into a global climate leader. While fossil fuel lobbyists make backroom deals to build new pipelines and wreck our climate, we can openly call for a Canada that's powered by renewables and respects both people and climate.

This campaign is gaining momentum, but to take things to the next level, we need organizers across the country, public education materials, outreach materials for volunteers and tech tools to connect communities to town halls being organized in ridings across the country.

Together, we can give the government the groundswell of support it needs to implement a climate strategy that builds a 100% clean economy, creates jobs and ensures a just transition for people and planet.

From the early forest fires in BC to the bleaching of 93% of the Great Barrier Reef, we're already experiencing the effects of climate change. That's why we need a national climate strategy.

The government has encouraged MPs to host climate town halls in their ridings and we are mobilizing people across the country to push MPs to host one in their riding. We hope to organize at least 150 town halls across the country to ensure everyone is able to speak up dur-

PM Trudeau is seriously considering caving to the fossil fuel industry's endless money and power by building new pipelines to expand the tar sands.

ing this generational opportunity to make Canada into a climate leader.

Under Harper, the Leadnow community had to fight tooth and nail to stop Canada from being a climate pariah. Now that we have a government that recognizes the reality and urgency of this issue, we have a generational opportunity to turn Canada into a climate leader.

Donate today to turn Canada into a climate leader. <https://secure.leadnow.ca/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1694&ea.campaign.id=50446>

**PS:** Whether or not you can donate to support this campaign, we'd like to see you participate in these climate town halls. Find out more information and pledge to attend a town hall in your riding at <http://peoplesclimate.ca/?source=LN>

Source: Leadnow.ca





# Take the Nature Challenge

**F**or the most part, our brains didn't evolve in cities. But in a few decades, almost 70 percent of the world's people will live in urban environments. Despite the prosperity we associate with cities, urbanization presents a major health challenge. Cities, with their accelerated pace of life, can be stressful. The results are seen in the brains and behaviour of those raised in cities or currently living in one.

On the upside, city dwellers are on average wealthier and receive better health care, nutrition and sanitation than rural residents. On the downside, they experience an increased risk of chronic disease, a more demanding and stressful social environment and greater levels of inequity. In fact, city dwellers have a 21 percent greater risk for anxiety disorders and a 39 percent increased likelihood of mood disorders.

**The 30X30 Nature Challenge asks people to commit to spending at least 30 minutes a day in nature for 30 days in May.**

A study published in *Nature* links city living with sensitivity to social stress. MRI scans show greater exposure to urban environments can increase activity in the amygdala, a brain structure involved in emotions such as fear and the release of stress-related hormones. According to the study, the amygdala "has been strongly implicated in anxiety disorders, depression and other behaviours that are increased in cities, such as violence."

The researchers also found people who lived in cities for their first 15 years experienced increased activity in an area of the brain that helps regulate the amygdala. So if you grew up in the city, you're more likely than those who moved there later in life to have permanently raised sensitivity to stress.

Author and professor David Gessner says we're turning into "fast twitch" animals. It's like we have an alarm clock going off in our brains every 30 seconds, sapping our ability to concentrate for longer periods of time.

How do we slow things down? Nature seems to be the answer. Cognitive psychologist David Strayer's hypothesis is that "being in nature allows the prefrontal cortex, the brain's command centre, to dial down and rest, like an overused muscle."

Research shows even brief interactions with nature can soothe our brains. Stanford's Gregory Bratman designed an experiment in which participants took a 50-minute walk in either a natural or an urban environment. People who took the nature walk experienced decreased anxiety, brooding and negative emotion and increased memory performance... Their study also showed neural activity in an area of the brain linked to risk for mental illness was reduced in participants who walked through nature compared with those who walked through an urban environment.

Spending time in nature regularly is not a panacea for mental health, but it's an essential component of health and psychological resilience.

Every spring, the David Suzuki Foundation challenges Canadians to spend more time outside for health and mental well-being. The 30X30 Nature Challenge asks people to commit to spending at least 30 minutes a day in nature for 30 days in May. Take the 30x30 pledge at [30x30.davidsuzuki.org](http://30x30.davidsuzuki.org) and receive the latest research on the health benefits of spending time outdoors.

Let's show our brains – and bodies – some love. Get outside!

Excerpted from the original article. **David Suzuki** is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation senior public engagement specialist Aryne Sheppard. Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)



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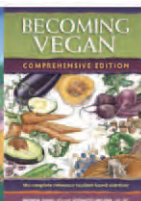
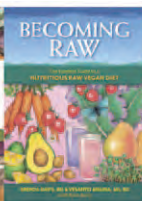
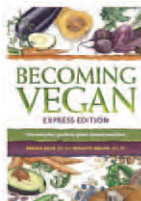
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– Ralph Waldo Emerson



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...GMO Bites from pg. 16

engineered with a bacterial gene that can still function in the presence of the (antibiotic) chelator. Then we quickly had cotton, canola and sugar beet and these RoundUp Ready crops revolutionized industrial agriculture. The crops can be planted without the standard preventive weed control. They are sprayed later when most of the weeds have sprouted and more than one spray is normal. And the game changed again when it became normal to spray non-engineered crops just before harvest to chemically dry them. The antibiotic/herbicide has been sprayed on most grain and seed crops as a dessicant for many years now. Of course, the residue levels must be much higher in foods made from grains and seeds that were sprayed just before harvest than engineered crops sprayed in the first few weeks of their growth. We have gone from using this chemical as a regular herbicide to spraying before planting the crops to spraying once or twice a few weeks later during the early growth of the plants, to finally spraying the crops a week before harvest. Extreme residue levels of glyphosate in food crops are now considered legal and normal.

Then comes the second part of my lecture where I comment on several studies showing toxicity. Glyphosate, the active ingredient of the herbicide RoundUp is patented as an antiparasitic agent (and non-selective antibiotic). I call glyphosate an antibiotic masquerading as an herbicide. As an antibiotic, glyphosate kills bacteria at 1 ppm – a clear and present danger.

In case you are not too familiar with recent discoveries in microbiome research, allow me to make a brief summary. All animals have a symbiotic association with trillions of bacteria that appear essential to their good health. This community of thousands of species of bacteria we call the microbiome. In humans, it is mostly in the intestine. Most of our organs are influenced by these symbionts. Another way to say it is that most of our organs depend on the integrity of the microbiome, notably the brain and the immune and digestive systems. Residues of antibiotic glyphosate higher than one part per million in our food could result in damages to the microbiome and lead to epidemics of chronic illnesses like autism, diabetes, Alzheimer's and cancer.

Monsanto and the regulatory agencies have not released their data on the levels of contamination in Canada and in the US. Perhaps you have data to document that the residues in most foods are below 1 ppm; please let me know.

I spend the rest of my lecture reviewing a few papers reporting on cell and animal experiments and cite studies showing endocrine disruption, oxidative stress, inflammation and cancer. WHO consulting experts – like Professor Portier – say it well on cancer risk in this German documentary on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQkQXyiyYs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQkQXyiyYs)

I finish with the peer-reviewed study of Dr. Nancy Swanson, who analyzed masses of data from the Centre for Disease Control [providing] statistics on autism, Alzheimer's, dementia, organ failure and cancer.

I believe the time has come for glyphosate to return to its days as an herbicide sprayed on weeds. The social and medical costs of spraying our food crops with this antibiotic to kill weeds are too high to justify its current use in industrial agriculture.

For more information, see [www.facebook.com/thierry.vrain](http://www.facebook.com/thierry.vrain)

### California to label 'Roundup' as "Cancer Causing"

Last year, California dealt Monsanto a blow when the state's Environmental Protection Agency decided to list glyphosate – the toxic main ingredient in the US' best-selling weedkiller, Roundup – as known to cause cancer.

Under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 – usually referred to as Proposition 65, its original name – chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm are required to be listed and published by the state. Chemicals also end up on the list if found to be carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a branch of the World Health Organization.

In March of 2015, the IARC released a report that found glyphosate to be a "probable carcinogen." Besides the "convincing evidence" the herbicide can cause cancer in lab animals, the report also found, "Case-control studies of occupational exposure in the U.S.A., Canada and Sweden reported increased risk for non-Hodgkin lymphoma that persisted after adjustments to other pesticides."

California's decision to place glyphosate on the toxic chemicals list is the first of its kind. As Dr. Nathan Donley of the Center for Biological Diversity said in an email to Ecowatch, "As far as I'm aware, this is the first regulatory agency within the US to determine that glyphosate is a carcinogen. So this is a very big deal."

Roundup is sprayed on crops around the world, particularly with Monsanto's Roundup-Ready varieties – genetically engineered to tolerate large doses of the herbicide to facilitate blanket application without harming crops. Controversy has surrounded this practice for years...

Less than a week after the WHO issued its report naming glyphosate carcinogenic, Monsanto called for a retraction.

An appeals court in Lyon, France, upheld a 2012 ruling in favour of farmer Paul Francois, who claimed he had been chemically poisoned and suffered neurological damage after inhaling Monsanto's weedkiller, Lasso.

Source: [www.theeventchronicle.com](http://www.theeventchronicle.com)

### 5 Million Nigerians oppose Monsanto's plans to introduce GMO cotton and corn

More than 100 groups representing over five million Nigerians, comprised of farmers, faith-based organizations, civil society groups, students and local community groups, are vehemently opposing Monsanto's attempts to introduce genetically modified (GM) cotton and maize into Nigeria's food and farming systems. In written objections submitted to the biosafety regulators, the groups have cited numerous serious health and environmental concerns and the failure of these crops especially GM cotton in Africa.

Monsanto Agricultural Nigeria Limited has applied to the National Biosafety Management Agency (NABMA) for the environmental release and placing in the market in Zaria and surrounding towns of GM cotton. A further application is for the confined field trial (CFT) of two GM maize varieties in multiple locations in Nigeria.

Source: [www.gmo-free-regions.org](http://www.gmo-free-regions.org)

## MAY 3 & 5

**Free Shamanic Power Initiations & Open Houses** hosted online & onsite by the Institute of Shamanic Medicine. Online 7PM May 3. Onsite Vancouver May 5, 7:30PM. RSVP by email to [info@shamanicmedicine.ca](mailto:info@shamanicmedicine.ca) Program/Retreats info at [www.shamanicmedicine.ca](http://www.shamanicmedicine.ca)

## MAY 6-8

**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

## MAY 7

**Natural Wellness Career & Jobs Fair:** Presented by Health Action Network Society (HANS). 10-4PM, Robson Square, 800 Robson St. 604-435-0512, [events@hans.org](mailto:events@hans.org) Info: [hans.org](http://hans.org)

## May 12

**More dangers for public education: The Trans-Pacific Partnership** and other trade agreements. Speakers from the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education (Canada/Mexico/US) will present on the impact of trade agreements on public education. Thursday, 7-9 p.m., BCTF building, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver.

## MAY 14

**Free Open House - Institute of Holistic Nutrition** (Vancouver): Course/Career opportunities, exhibits, lectures & more. 10AM-3:30PM, 604 West Broadway, Ste. 300. 604-558-4000. Lecture descriptions at [www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com](http://www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com)

## MAY 15

**Meditation for Spiritual Awareness:** 2PM, FREE Intro Workshop in RICHMOND by Science of Spirituality on the Theory & Practice of JYOTI MEDITATION (Meditation on the Inner Light). For directions and to register, call Linda: 604-985-5840.

## MAY 15-17

**Tri-national Conference in Defence of Public Education:** Indigenous Educators' Encounter. British Columbia Teachers' Federation celebrating a century. 604-871-2283, 1-800-663-9163, [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca)

## MAY 15 & 29

**Krishnamurti Vancouver Group** @ Vancouver Public Library, Board Breakout Room, 350 W. Georgia St. 1-5PM. Free video showing & dialogue! [www.meetup.com/Krishnamurti-Vancouver-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Krishnamurti-Vancouver-Group)

## MAY 15 & JUN 9

Events at Banyen – May 15: Sujith Ravindran free talk, 11:30AM-1PM “Shiva & Shakti Relationship.” June 9: Linda Star Wolf free talk, 6:30-8PM “Visionary Shaman Within.” 604-737-8858, [banyen.com](http://banyen.com)

## MAY 17

**Meditation for Spiritual Awareness** – 6PM, FREE Intro Workshop in VANCOUVER by Science of Spirituality on the Theory & Practice of JYOTI MEDITATION (Meditation on the Inner Light). For directions and to register, call Linda: 604-985-5840.

## MAY 20

**HATCH Art Gallery Show:** Expressions of the Light and Sound. Opening Celebration: Fri. May 20, 5-7:00PM. Exhibit: Sat. May 21, 9AM-7PM. UBC NEST, 6133 University Blvd. [www.eckankar-bc.ca](http://www.eckankar-bc.ca)

## MAY 21

**Free Event: “Have You Heard the Call of Soul?”** Open Your Heart to the Answers Within You.” Presented by Eckankar. 1:30-4PM at The Next (formerly the UBC student union bldg., 6133 University Blvd. 1-800-708-9060. Everyone welcome.

## MAY 28

**TEDxStanleyPark** 10-6PM at Queen Elizabeth Theatre. “What Does Legendary Look Like?” Superb speakers, venue, hospitality and sustainability. Buy your ticket at [www.tedxstanleypark.com](http://www.tedxstanleypark.com)

## JUN 1

**Evolution Revolution:** Clearmind Counsellor Training Info Night, 7:30PM, Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak St @ 41st. [clearmind.com](http://clearmind.com) Clip coupon in display ad this page & attend for free.

## JUN 4

**Vesak 2016:** Celebrate Vesak (commemoration of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away) in Vancouver. Pray and meditate for the sake of inner peace and world peace. Free event, 9:30AM-3PM, Vancouver Tech Auditorium, 2600 E. Broadway. Features bathing the Buddha, Buddhist prayers, dharma talks, guided meditation, free vegetarian lunch. Lots of parking.

## JUN 9-12

**Inner Engineering** with Sadhguru-trained Isha teacher: UBC Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall. FREE INTRO Thursday 6:30-7:30PM

[Vancouver@IshaFoundation.org](mailto:Vancouver@IshaFoundation.org), 604-644-5429 [www.InnerEngineering.com/Live](http://www.InnerEngineering.com/Live)

## JUN 10-12

**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

## AUG 21

**8th Tsleil-Waututh Cultural Arts Festival:** 12-7PM, Cates Park North Vancouver. Chief Dan George Stage features Crystal Shawanda, Children of Takaya, Coast Salish dancers & live music. Food, paddling, demonstrations, artisans & more. Info at: [twnation.ca](http://twnation.ca), 604-929-3454.

## AUG 27-28

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## THURSDAYS

**Free class, Parkinson's Support Group:** 2nd & 4th Thursday each month, 1-2 PM: St. Mary's Anglican Church, 2490 W. 37th Ave. More info: Christina, [www.mindfulmovementtherapy.ca](http://www.mindfulmovementtherapy.ca), 604-649-8522.



## Bikes on Bloor

On May 4th, Toronto city council voted 38-3 to install a pilot bicycle lane on Toronto's Bloor Street. This prominent new bike lane will do more than just improve air quality and traffic in Toronto; it will help usher in a new era in safe cycling right across the country.

The David Suzuki Foundation was instrumental in the decision, making presentations to city councillors, publishing opinion articles and encouraging thousands of citizens to contact city hall – all with the goal of making cycling safer, reducing air pollution and protecting the climate.

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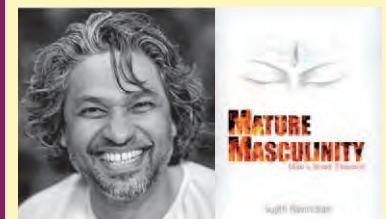
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...Christy from p.5

lines, hotels, office supplies and more than \$100,000 to communications companies Rogers and Telus. Taxpayers also paid for other excesses, such as a \$3,267.66 meal tab at Ferris' Oyster Bar in Victoria and \$2,279 at Bishop's in Vancouver.

"Our hearts are with you," said Clark last year when she finally showed up at the site of Mt. Polley, one of the biggest environmental disasters in Canadian history. "And I know it's just been a terrible, terrible heartache. We are going to be with you, shoulder to shoulder, to do everything we can to return it to the real pristine beauty we all know this lake is for

our province, because this is just such an incredible, incredible asset and so important to all of you."

At press time, the Auditor General had laid the blame squarely where it belongs: with Clark's government. And Hon. Bill Bennett – Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Core Review – made a promise to resign if an independent review found just cause. Another broken promise from Christy's crack team. Bill, unfortunately, is very much still with us.

The asset she really continues to cheerlead and obsess over is LNG, rhapsodizing, "This is about our opportunity to make... the biggest contribution

we ever have, as a province, to reducing greenhouse gas emissions around the globe – by powering up the economies of Asia and helping them move to the cleanest fossil fuel on the planet... move away from dirty fuels, cleaning up the air there, and cleaning up the air here." She has the wrong information say experts, now discounting LNG as a "transition" fuel.

All this, despite the global crash in demand and price, increased competition and overwhelming evidence that LNG – fracked methane – is as bad as any fossil fuel when you factor in water waste and contamination, induced earthquakes, fugitive emissions, pipelines and tankers. "We're really good at fracking in BC," brags Clark.

Meanwhile, the rest of the world has gone in the opposite direction, embracing – and prospering from – green power and clean technology. As the planet reels from water shortages and declining food security and safety, she contemplates Site C Dam, the largest project in BC history. Christy would flood tens of thousands of acres of prime Peace River Valley farmland to feed and fuel her fracking hallucinations, as nightmarish record global temperatures and sea levels rise every month and Fort McMurray burns.

"LNG prosperity" and "Families First" were the narrow planks from which Clark stole the last election. Whose prosperity? Whose family? BC has the lowest business taxes and the highest child poverty rate and is the most unequal province in wealth and the only one with no poverty reduction plan.

What's up? BC Medical Services Plan revenue (now more in taxation than royalties from forests, natural gas and mining combined) and ICBC premiums, bridge tolls and hydro rates. From campsites to classrooms, we're paying more and borrowing more to make ends meet. In its annual provincial Check-Up, the Chartered Professional Accountants of BC noted that provincial consumer debt is \$58,621 per capita, \$10,000 higher than the national average of \$49,624, and rising.

In the meantime, death by a thousand ongoing cuts: to public education, health care, surgeries, domestic violence and outreach, income assistance, special needs assessments and programs, family law services, legal aid, community outreach, diagnostic and rehabilitation services, parks budgets, environment, senior care services and beds, mental health, addiction services, student aid, PAC funding and annual facility grants to schools, etc., etc.

In recent days, Christy's method and madness is clear: Divide and Conquer. Rural versus urban, she is suggesting: "There are those in downtown Vancouver and Victoria who would have us say no. They just say no to LNG. They say no to everything. We need to stand up as the forces of Yes and make that voice heard in Victoria and downtown Vancouver."

Her labelling strategy – from Yoga to LNG haters – is a hit in some circles. Wide of the mark in many more. In Christy's own words, "People will say anything to get elected."

Email [brucemason@shaw.ca](mailto:brucemason@shaw.ca) and let us know what you think Christy and her cabinet, her cronies and cabal should be judged on. ■



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